

SCAPULAR

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to religious sacraments and more particularly, to a brown scapular of religious significance.

Description of the Related Art

[0002] The scapular is a form of clothing worn by monks when they were working. The scapular is a long strip of cloth, generally the width of the body, worn over the shoulders (scapula) from the front to the back and down to the ankles.

[0003] Derived from the scapulars worn by monks are symbolic scapulars. Such a scapular is two pieces of cloth (generally about an inch square), connected by cloth cords and worn over the head. It often has a picture or a particular color, depending on the spirituality it stands for. With the passage of time, people began to give symbolic meaning to the scapular. In some religious Orders, such as the Carmelites, the Scapular turned into a sign of their way of life. The Scapular came to symbolize the special dedication of Carmelites to Mary, the Mother of God, and to express trust in her motherly protection as well as the desire to be like her in her commitment to Christ and to others. Thus it became a sign of Mary. The brown scapular is a sign approved by the Church and accepted by the Carmelite Order as an external sign of love for Mary, of the trust her children have in her, and of commitment to live like her.

[0004] Unfortunately the known scapulars of today do not wear well. Conventional scapulars are either all cloth, selectively covered in plastic, or all metal. Cloth scapulars become worn with time and may eventually fall apart. Plastic may be used to cover the cloth pendants, however, the cloth necklace remains exposed and may still eventually break thus rendering the scapular un-usable. Thus, cloth and plastic scapulars must continually be replaced. Frequent replacement does not provide continuity in the keeping and wearing of the scapular. Conventional metal

scapulars exists, however, they do not incorporate any wool cloth. Thus, the importance and symbolism of the wool cloth is ignored.

Summary of the Invention

[0005] The present invention is directed towards a metal scapular having a necklace, including a pendant, and a piece of cloth. The pendant includes a cavity and the piece of cloth is disposed within the cavity.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0006] FIG. 1 is a front view of a scapular according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0007] FIG. 2 is a back view of the scapular according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0008] FIG. 3 is a side view of one pendant of the scapular according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0009] FIG. 4 is a front view of one pendant of the scapular having a hinge according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 5 is a rear view of one pendant of the scapular attached to a chain by an alternate embodiment according to the present invention.

Detailed Description

[0011] Referring now to Figures 1-3, a scapular 10 is shown according to one embodiment of the present invention. The scapular 10 is generally worn around the neck. Scapular 10 includes a necklace 12, two pendants 14, 16 and a piece of wool 18. Necklace 12 includes a first and second chain 12a and 12b, respectively. Pendant 14 is attached to first chain 12a at an attachment point 15a. Pendant 16 is attached to first chain 12a at an attachment point 15b. First chain 12a is longer than second chain 12b. First and second chains 12a, 12b are connected together such that both ends of second chain 12b are connected to first chain 12a. As best shown in Figure 1, one end

of second chain 12b may be connected to first chain 12a, for example, where first chain 12a is connected to pendant 14. The opposing end of second chain 12b may be connected to chain 12a, for example, at the midpoint of first chain 12a. First and second chains 12a, 12b form a loop 20 by which the scapular 10 may be placed around the neck of a person (not shown) wearing the scapular 10. Properly worn, pendant 14 rests upon the front torso of the wearer, while pendant 16 hangs behind the wearer.

[0012] Referring to Figure 1, front face 22 of pendant 14 and front face 24 of pendant 16 are shown according to one embodiment of the present invention. Front face 22 of pendant 14 may depict a religious pictorial. In the illustrated embodiment, face 22 of pendant 14 has a picture of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Front face 24 of pendant 16 may recite a religious prayer or scripture. In the illustrated embodiment, pendant 16 contains a scripture associated with Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. However, it can be appreciated that the present invention is not limited to the illustrated embodiments and can be practiced with any number of religious pictorials and prayers or scriptures.

[0013] Likewise, rear face 26 of pendant 14 and rear face 28 of pendant 16 are shown according to one embodiment of the present invention. Referring to Figure 2, rear faces 26, 28 of pendants 14 and 16, respectively, may have an insignia of a cross 30. The cross 30 may be centered around an opening 32. However, it can be appreciated that the present invention is not limited to the illustrated embodiment and may be practiced with any picture and any scripture on front faces 22, 24 of pendants 14 and 16. Moreover, the present invention may be practiced with only one insignia of cross 30 on either pendant 14 or pendant 16 or no insignia at all. Finally, the scapular of the present invention may be practiced with any size and shape of opening 32, so long as opening 32 allows the wearer to be in contact with the wool 18.

[0014] Front face 22 and rear face 26 of pendant 14 are held together by an attachment mechanism, illustrated without limitations, as pins 34 positioned at the four corners of pendants 14. Pins 34 hold front and rear faces 22, 26 of pendant 14 together such that an open cavity 36 is formed between front and rear faces 22, 26. Similarly, front and rear faces 24, 28 of pendant 16 are held together by pins 34 such that an open cavity (not shown) similar to open cavity 36 is formed between front and

rear faces 24, 28. Wool 18 is placed within cavity 36, as best illustrated in Figure 3. Wool 18 may be felt through opening 32, such that wool 18 may generally be in contact with the skin of the wearer. Typically, wool 18 is approximately the size of pendants 14 and 16, however, wool 18 may be of any desired size so long as wool 18 may be felt through opening 32. Preferably, wool 18 is smaller in size than pendants 14 or 16 due to space restrictions on the open cavity 36 by pins 34.

[0015] Alternatively, the attachment mechanism may also include a hinge 38 as shown in Figure 4. The hinge 38 may be positioned along one edge of pendants 14 and 16, pivotally attaching front and rear faces 22, 26 of pendant 14 together, and front and rear faces 24, 28 of pendant 16 together. Hinge 38 allows front and rear faces to pivotally open to expose wool 18. Pins 34 may still be placed along the two corners opposite hinge 38 of each pendant to secure front and rear faces of the pendants together and prevent wool 18 from falling out of cavity 36. A latch (not shown) may be placed along an edge opposite of the hinge 38 to secure front and rear faces of the pendants. The hinge 38 and latch attachment means allows the wearer to quickly and easily access cavity 36 and wool 18. However, the present invention is not limited to the attachment means illustrated, but may also include means such as an adhesive, wire, or the like.

[0016] Figure 5 illustrates an alternate embodiment of the present invention. Pendants 14 and 16 may be attached to necklace 12 at two attachment points. Having two attachment points allows pendants 14 and 16 to hang evenly against the wearer. Additionally, having two attachment points may also eliminate the need for having pins 34 on the two corners in closest proximity to the two attachment points.

[0017] The necklace 12 and the two pendants 14, 16 of the present invention are preferably manufactured from metal. The metal provides the necklace 12 and the two pendants 14, 16 with robustness for use in various environments. The metal protects wool 18 from environmental elements, for example, from exposure to the sun and moisture. Furthermore, metal may be easily stamped or engraved. Thus, the necklace 12 and the two pendants 14, 16 of the present invention may be manufactured in large quantities using a stamping machine, or individually hand-crafted by an engraver.

[0018] Conventional scapulars are either all cloth, selectively covered in plastic, or metal. Cloth scapulars become worn with time and may eventually fall apart.

Plastic may be used to cover the cloth pendants, however, the cloth necklace remains exposed and may still eventually break thus rendering the scapular un-usable.

Conventional metal scapulars are durable, however, they do not include any wool cloth. Thus, conventional metal scapulars do not incorporate the importance and the symbolism surrounding the pieces of cloth.

[0019] On the other hand, the scapular 10 of the present invention incorporates both modern durability and tradition. Metal is more long-lasting than cloth, and because individual scapulars may have sentimental value, the metal scapular 10 of the present invention offers the wearer an opportunity to use the scapular 10 longer than conventional scapulars. Additionally, the scapular 10 of the present invention incorporates the wool cloth 18, and the religious symbolism associated with the wool. It can be noted that the wool cloth 18 of may be of various colors, depending on the of the religious preferences of the person wearing the scapular.

[0020] Moreover, the front and rear faces 22, 24, 26, 28 of each pendant 14 and 16 may be easily separated so that the piece of wool 18 may be replaced if necessary, without replacing the entire scapular 10.

[0021] While certain preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described, the invention is not limited to the illustrations described and shown herein, which are deemed to be merely illustrative of the best modes of carrying out the invention. A person of ordinary skill in the art will realize that certain modifications and variations will come within the teachings of this invention and that such variations and modifications are within its spirit and the scope as defined by the claims.